DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 410 787 HE 030 322

AUTHOR Satterlee, Brian
TITLE Internationalizing Graduate-Level Business Curricula.
PUB DATE 1997-07-00
NOTE 21p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Accreditation (Institutions); Accrediting Agencies; *Business Administration Education; Consortia; *Curriculum Development; Foreign Countries; Global Approach; *Graduate Study; Higher Education; Institutional Role; *International Education; International Programs

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses contemporary issues concerning the internationalization of graduate-level business curricula. It examines the consensus within international consortia of universities concerning a curriculum in international business, focusing on the need for internationalizing the business curriculum, the benefits to developing nations, the extent of business schools' participation in international consortia, examples of successful consortia, and the characteristics of successful consortia. The paper then addresses the role of accreditation in achieving quality in global education systems, focusing on the accreditation process, regional accreditation and quality, and specialized accreditation. It goes on to review curriculum development guidelines for university business programs, focusing on accrediting bodies' criteria for business curriculum development, quality and continuous improvement in the business curriculum development process, and the role of the Centers for International Business Education and Research in developing curriculum. Finally, the paper examines the reconciliation of the diversity/conformance paradox in international business school curriculum. (Contains 32 references.) (MDM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 410 787

INTERNATIONALIZING GRADUATE-LEVEL BUSINESS CURRICULA

By

Brian Satterlee, Ed.D.
Professor of Business and Dean,
Division of Adult & Continuing Education
Warner Southern College (FL)
(941) 638-3801

July 1997

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IR 020 322

Brian Satterlee

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Brian C. Satterlee currently serves as professor of business and dean of Adult and Continuing Education at Warner Southern College. Warner Southern College, located in Lake Wales, Florida, is a private, four-year liberal arts institution. Prior to joining Warner Southern in 1992, he was director of Technical and Industrial Education at Seminole Community College. He received his doctorate in Occupational Education from Nova Southeastern University, has published nationally and regionally within his discipline, and has presented papers at professional conferences. Dr. Satterlee has consulted with numerous organizations on topics related to strategic management in higher education, human resources development, and the development and evaluation of educational programs and services.

INTERNATIONALIZING GRADUATE-LEVEL BUSINESS CURRICULA

By
Brian Satterlee, Ed.D.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to discuss contemporary issues concerning the internationalization of graduate-level business curricula. Four issues will provide the framework for discussion: (1) is there consensus within international consortia of universities concerning a curriculum in international business; (2) what is the role of accreditation in achieving quality in global educational systems; (3) do curriculum development guidelines for university business programs exist; and (4) the diversity/conformance paradox of university business curricula.

Issue One consists of five sections: (1) the need for internationalizing the business curriculum; (2) benefits to third world nations in internationalizing the business curriculum; (3) the extent of business schools participation in international consortia; (4) examples of successful business school international consortia; and (5) characteristics of effective international consortial partnerships.

Issue Two consists of four sections: (1) a discussion of the accreditation process; (2) positive and negative aspects of the accreditation process; (3) aspects of regional accreditation and quality; and (4) aspects of specialized accreditation and quality.

Issue Three consists of three sections: (1) accrediting bodies' criteria for business curriculum development; (2) the issue of quality and continuous improvement in the business curriculum development process; and (3) the role of the Centers for International Business Education and Research in developing the international business curriculum.

Issue Four consists of three sections: (1) the need for curricular consistency in business school programs; (2) the need for curricular diversity in business schools programs; and (3) reconciling the conformity/diversity paradox in business school curricula.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to discuss contemporary issues concerning the internationalization of graduate-level business curricula. Four issues will provide the framework for discussion: (1) is there consensus within international consortia of universities concerning a curriculum in international business; (2) what is the role of accreditation in achieving quality in global educational systems; (3) do curriculum development guidelines for university business programs exist; and (4) the diversity/conformance paradox of university business curricula.

Issue One consists of five sections: (1) the need for internationalizing the business curriculum; (2) benefits to third world nations in internationalizing the business curriculum; (3) the extent of business schools participation in international consortia; (4) examples of successful business school international consortia; and (5) characteristics of effective international consortial partnerships.

Issue Two consists of four sections: (1) a discussion of the accreditation process; (2) positive and negative aspects of the accreditation process; (3) aspects of regional accreditation and quality; and (4) aspects of specialized accreditation and quality.

Issue Three consists of three sections: (1) accrediting bodies' criteria for business curriculum development; (2) the issue of quality and continuous improvement in the business curriculum development process; and (3) the role of the Centers for International Business Education and Research in developing the international business curriculum.

Issue Four consists of three sections: (1) the need for curricular consistency in business school programs; (2) the need for curricular diversity in business schools programs; and (3) reconciling the conformity/diversity paradox in business school curricula.

Issue One: Consortia Consensus on the International Business Curriculum

The global business environment requires employees who can work effectively across national and cultural boundaries and manage in a "borderless world" (Kenichi, 1989). According to Odenwald (1993), education plays a major role in training employees to manage in the borderless world. The benefits of education to the firm include: (1) improve the ability to identify viable business opportunities; (2) avoid wasting resources on ill-concieved ventures; (3) provide a

competitive edge over other global firms; (4) improve job satisfaction and retention of overseas staff; (5) prevent lost business due to insensitivity to cultural norms; and (6) improve effectiveness in the turbulent external environment. It is sometimes implied that third world educational systems, and their supporting governments, tend to be parochial in nature and are thus irrelevant in helping their nations achieve competitiveness in global markets. One way to overcome these obstacles in economic development is for third world educational systems to become part of an international educational consortium. Third world educational systems can move from the previously mentioned parochial mind set to the more cosmopolitan mind set via participation in university consortium activities concerning international business.

Changes in the turbulent external environment of business and government act as catalysts of change for university business programs. Those involved in management education must take into account the paradigmatic shifts in the educational arena. "The challenge for management education is to help students learn to manage change ethically, effectively, and efficiently, whether the changes involve international boundaries, human resources, financial considerations, political constraints, asset allocations, work ethics, process and productivity, total quality management, or a combination" (Skousen & Bertelson, 1994, p. 14). This internationalization of the business curriculum requires the infusion of global materials into all business courses. Additionally, business schools should themselves become global institutions, operating in various part of the world, providing regular and diverse global inputs into the educational process. Most business schools lack the resources for this sort of activity, thus the need to establish consortial arrangements with foreign business schools (Green, 1996). Can a consortium of universities from different countries with varying levels of economic development achieve consensus on a mutual business curriculum? An affirmative response to this question is supported by the literature.

Kwok & Arpen (1994) conducted a study to compare the methods used by American and European institutions in internationalizing business school curricula and faculty. The curricular conclusions indicate that efforts to internationalize the business curriculum have increased over time in terms of breadth and depth, and although a wide variety of approaches have been used to international the curriculum, no single approach seems appropriate for all schools. The results of the study further indicate three basic approaches to internationalizing the business curriculum: (1)

infusion, which involves the introduction of global issues within the existing curriculum; (2) require all students to take one general international business course; and (3) require all students to take one international specialty course in their particular major field. The most dominant method is infusion, as stated by 74 percent of the study respondents. Finally, the authors indicate that 39 percent of business schools in the study belonged to at least one consortia for the conduct of international business activity.

A related article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (1994) reports on a pilot project by the European Union to establish a permanent academic exchange program with the United States. The project involves twenty-three separate consortia, comprising more than 200 U.S. and European institutions. U.S. participation is sponsored by the Department of education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary education. A spin off pilot project will focus on the discipline of business. Other university international business program consortia exist. The International Educational Consortium for St. Petersburg, consisting of nine Russian universities and thirteen U.S. and European institutions, was formed to offer joint degree programs and joint research (*Baylor Business Review*, Spring 1994). De Meyer (1996) reports on an educational consortium comprised of Lancaster University (United Kingdom), McGill University (Canada), Hitotsubashi (Japan), and the Bangalore Institute of Management (India). The purpose of this consortium is to provide a joint MBA program for mid-career corporate executives who have achieved a degree of personal success but need to broaden their education.

The United States is not the only nation in the western hemisphere with international university consortia. LaSalle University (Mexico City) has joined a consortium of universities in France to offer a master's degree in international business (Statland de Lopez, 1995). Additionally, consortia activity is taking place between western hemisphere universities. The Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education, sponsored by the governments of Canada, Mexico, and the United States has been developed to spur more trilateral academic cooperation. Monetary grants have been made available to the 72 institutions which comprise the consortia. The transfer of academic credits earned by consortia students is guaranteed (Desruisseaux, 1995). A related article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (1996) reports that a consortium of universities in Canada, Chile, Mexico, and the United States has developed a joint

degree business program with emphasis on the North American Free Trade Agreement. Students participating in the nine-university consortium earn the M.B.A. degree from their geographic origin university, then matriculate through the consortial Master of International Business degree program.

Finally, a report from the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (1997) recognizes and supports the need for business schools to expand beyond the traditional venues of the geographic delivery of services. Recommended characteristics of effective consortial partnerships include: (1) the nurturing of win-win arrangements that create "equally synergistic value for all parties"; (2) the maintenance of lasting personal contacts between on both or all sides of the agreement; (3) a set of criteria are in place to ensure compatibility with the direction and focus of participants; and (4) standards for off-campus programs are kept at the same quality as on campus. Thus, the literature provides an affirmative response to the question, "Can a consortium of universities from different countries with varying levels of economic development achieve consensus on a mutual business curriculum?"

Issue Two: The Role of Accreditation in Achieving Quality in Global Educational Systems

The previous section discussed the role of educational consortia in adapting the international business curriculum to the turbulent external environment. This section will discuss the role of accreditation as an element of adaptation. "Business schools interested in reform should explore possible alliance with other schools at home and abroad, with industry, government, and business school accrediting bodies -- the American Assembly of Colleges and Schools of Business and the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs" (Hasan, 1993, p. 48). Since higher education in all nations, except in the United States, is a function of the national government, this section will be limited to the role of accreditation in the United States, where accreditation is a non-governmental voluntary peer review process.

> Voluntary accreditation of educational institutions, as carried out by the various accrediting bodies, is a uniquely American process. Accreditation is sought voluntarily by institutions and is conferred on non-governmental bodies. Voluntary accreditation has two fundamental purposes: quality assurance and institutional and program improvement. There are two types of voluntary accreditation of educational institutions: institutional accreditation and specialized accreditation.

> Institutional accreditation evaluates an entire institution and accredits it as a whole. Six national accrediting associations are institutional accrediting associations. While independent of one another, the six regional associations cooperate extensively and recognize one another's accreditation.
>
> Specific programs within an educational institution can also seek accreditation. This specialized (or program) accreditation evaluates particular units, schools, or programs within an institution and is often associated with national professional associations, such as those for engineering, medicine, or law, or with specific disciplines, such as business, education, psychology, or social work. Institutional accreditation is separate from the accreditation given or withheld by professional associations (*North Central Association Handbook of Accreditation*, 1994, p. 1).

The positive aspects of an accreditation process in achieving educational quality include institutional and programmatic self-knowledge, accountability to significant publics, and the establishment of legal standards. On the other hand, the process can be time consuming, expensive and troublesome, and can be less beneficial to the individual institution as more schools are accredited and exclusivity diminishes. "In practice, accreditation is more of a tolerated outcome than a desired one" (Hasan, 1993, p. 48). According to Zoffer (1987, p. 43), "Accreditation cannot guarantee excellence; it can only set minimum standards, a threshold concept which suggests satisfactory performance."

The regional accrediting associations offer generic guidelines and criteria for assessing quality in educational programs. Major emphasis is placed on mission centrality, i.e., the extent to which an educational program fulfills its intended mission. The following are examples of criteria relating to assessing quality in higher education.

> The institution's programs are consistent with and serve to fulfill its mission and purposes. Each educational program demonstrates consistency through its goals, structure, and content; policies and procedures for admission and retention; instructional methods and procedures; and the nature, quality, and extent of student learning and achievement (New England Association Standards for Accreditation, 1992, p. 8).

> The Commission on Colleges expects each institution and program to adopt an assessment scheme responsive to its mission and needs. In doing so, the Commission urges the necessity of a continuous process of academic planning, the carrying out of those plans, the assessment of the outcomes, and the influencing of

> the planning process by the assessment activities (Northwest Association of Colleges and Schools Accreditation Handbook, 1994, p. 57).
>
> All aspects of the educational program must be clearly related to the purpose of the institution...In addition, the institution must ensure appropriate levels of student achievement and equivalent quality of programs regardless of method of instruction or location of program (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Criteria for Accreditation, 1996, p. 24).

As previously indicated, two specialized national accrediting bodies exist for the academic disciplines related to business: the American Assembly of Colleges and Schools of Business (AACSP) and the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). The AACSP is the older and larger of the two. Both accrediting bodies include more specific criteria for assessing the quality of business programs. However, like the regional accrediting bodies, the AACSP and the ACBSP criteria stop short of dictating standards to institutions. According to the AACSB (1996, p. 1),

> Accreditation focuses on the quality of educational activities. Standards set demanding but realistic thresholds, challenge schools to pursue continuous improvement, and provide guidance for improvement in educational programs...each school must achieve and demonstrate an acceptable level of performance consistent with its won mission while satisfying AACSB standards. Substantial opportunity remains for schools to differentiate themselves through a variety of activities.

In a similar fashion, the ACBSP (1992, p.1) writes:

> Due to the diversity of missions of colleges and universities, these resource-based standards may not be applicable to all institutions. An ACBSP business school or program as part of an accreditation process, may decide to request a deviation from a particular standard and provide the necessary justification to support such a deviation.

The issue of curricular diversity in institutions and conformance to national standards for business curricula will be further discussed in Part Four of this document.

Issue Three: Curriculum Development Guidelines for University Business Programs

In Issue One, the literature clearly demonstrated the use of consortia in developing university-level international business programs. The issue then becomes one of offering programs of consistent quality. In Issue Two, the role of accrediting bodies in achieving quality in business programs was discussed. The literature identified mission centrality as a preferred approach to assessing quality in business programs. The next issue then becomes one of identifying quality efforts vis-a-vis standardizing the business curriculum. This section explores the efforts of curriculum quality via standardization for international business programs.

The AACSB (1996) provides specific criteria for content coverage of graduate programs in business: (1) ethical and global issues; (2) the influence of political, social, legal and regulatory, environmental and technology issue; and (3) the impact of demographic diversity on organizations. The curriculum for MBA and other general master's degree programs should include the following eighteen semester-hours core of courses: financial reporting, analysis, and markets; domestic and global economic environments of organizations; creation and distribution of goods and services; and human behavior in organizations. Part or the entire core may be completed at the undergraduate level. In any event, the MBA curriculum should require at least thirty semester-hours beyond the core areas. Provision is made for specialized masters' programs, i.e., master of international business. The specialized degree curriculum should require at least thirty semester-hours of course work, with at least twelve semester-hours in the area of specialization. Finally, the AACSB mandates that the business curriculum of an institution should be the result of a mission centrality-based curriculum planning process.

The ACBSP (1992) has also developed standards to guide the development of business curricula. Like the AACSB, a common professional component is required for accreditation. This core includes: business functions and operations; economic/social/legal environment; quantitative methods and information systems; organizational theory and interpersonal behavior; administrative processes and policy; and a comprehensive integrating experience. Like the AACSB, the common core may be completed at either the undergraduate or the graduate level. In any event, thirty semester-hours beyond the core are required for accreditation. The ACBSP

differs from the AACSB in the area of specialized masters' degrees: one-half of the credit hours for the degree must be in the area of specialization

As previously mentioned, a primary goal of accreditation is to improve the quality of education. Accreditors are not the only people who are concerned with the issue of quality in education. Several authors have written concerning quality in the business curriculum. Matthews (1993, p.102) writing on the Total Quality Management curriculum, states, "There is a very real danger of academia teaching one set of values and adopting a different set for itself -- an inappropriate state of affairs if it is to play a meaningful role in expanding the use of TQM in American society." He further lists a seven-step strategy for providing academic excellence. These steps may be applied to the curriculum development process as well: (1) identify the stakeholders; (2) determine what the stakeholders want; (3) develop a specific, competitive quality-based mission; (4) establish internal measures for quality and excellence in specific and identified areas, i.e., the curriculum; (5) develop a methodology for defining what quality and excellence means; (6) determine who has to commit to the chosen standards; and (7) establish "motivation" for those unwilling to commit to quality and excellence.

Ensby and Mahmoodi (1997) promote the benefits of using the Baldrige Award criteria for improving educational programs. The authors state:

> Basically, the pursuit of a college major and its corresponding degree program should take a student through what is called the six levels of Bloom's taxonomy: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. When taken in total, students' education should take them through all six levels with sufficient reinforcement to ensure they are capable of contributing in the real world. Thus, when courses are being developed for curricula, several basic questions need to be answered: What is the purpose of the course? What specific objectives are required for the students' successful completion of the course? Does the course require follow-up classes in which the student will have to transfer basic knowledge and skills learned, or does it provide students with real-world skills (Ensby & Mahmoodi, 1997, p. 90)?

The authors describe the National Institute of Standards and Technology pilot program for education, which applies the Baldrige Award criteria to facilitate the development of an integrated curriculum development process that focusses on course design, delivery, and assessment. Concerning curricular design, the most important aspect of the process is alignment. As the

departmental goals are in alignment with the university goals, so must the objectives of each course be in alignment with departmental goals. As with the accreditation standards, the pilot program appears to focus on the issue of mission centrality in the curriculum.

Kendrick (1993) identifies the traditional design process as a problem in the curriculum development. Faculty in business schools tend to be discipline specialists, organized by their discipline. In the traditional process, individual faculty members work alone or in small groups within their discipline to develop curriculum. Interdisciplinary collaboration is needed to move beyond this myopic process of curriculum development. Since international business is a crossfunctional topic, common areas need to be identified in the curriculum development process, such as: (1) cover the breadth of international business; (2) integrate international business throughout the curriculum; and (3) teach international business as an approach to managing.

Ehrhardt (1992) discusses the development of a guide to MBA curriculum and content at the University of Tennessee. The curriculum consists of three parts: a core curriculum, a set of out-of-class experiential activities, and elective courses in specialized areas of knowledge. What differentiates this process from those previously mentioned is the following statement:

> The effectiveness of the curriculum lies not just in the selection of topics: it is the structure of the program itself that differentiates the learning experience. The structure causes students to focus on the creation of customer value, to work as teams, and to apply the tools of process improvement to realistic crossfunctional problems. The result is a more effective manager, one with the vision to understand the issues of competitiveness in a global marketplace, and with the people skills and the practical experiences necessary to actually improve an organization's competitiveness...we believe that a curriculum is not a "thing"; instead, it is a process, something that grows and changes and improves (Ehrhardt, 1992, pp. 13 & 17).

The common thread concerning the issue of quality in the business curriculum is that, in light of changes in the turbulent external environment, the process should be more collaborative and interdisciplinary in nature than just discipline specific.

The Centers for International Business Education and Research (CIBERs), administered by the U.S. Department of Education, were developed to link the international education, language training, and research capabilities of universities across the U.S. with the needs of U.S. businesses. Currently, twenty-seven CIBERs are in operation, and a *CIBER Resource Handbook*

(1995) is available online through the Purdue University CIBER. *Handbook* topics include: (1) course outlines and teaching materials developed for international business; (2) course outlines and teaching materials developed for business foreign language; (3) outreach activities for the business community; and (4) programs, conferences, and opportunities for faculty development in international business.

Curriculum development in the *Handbook* is provided in a core reference list of topics that indicate the breadth of knowledge normally expected of a graduate student or junior faculty member in the area of international business. The list, developed jointly by the CIBERS at the University of Maryland-College Park, Purdue University, and Duke University, is the result of research from books and monographs of permanent value. It does not include the periodical literature. The following table provides an outline of the list.

Table
Core Reference List

I. International Business as a Field of Study
   - A. Classics
   - B. Current Surveys of the Field

II. International Economics

III. Multinational Enterprises
   - A. Evolution/Status of Multinational Enterprises
   - B. International Strategy and Management
   - C. Alternative Forms of International Business Organization

IV. International Business Functions
   - A. International Marketing
   - B. International Finance
   - C. International Management/Human Resource Management
   - D. International Accounting
   - E. International Production
   - F. International Transportation/Logistics
   - G. International Communications

V. Social/Cultural Aspects of International Business
   - A. Cultural Aspects of International Business
   - B. International Business Ethics
   - C. International Business Negotiations

VI. International Business and Governments
   - A. National Policies Toward International Business
   - B. International Law, Institutions, and Policy

VII. Country and Regional Business Studies
   - A. Multi-Country
   - B. North America
   - C. Latin America
   - D. European Community
   - E. Post-Communist World
   - F. Africa-Asia
   - G. Japan/Pacific Rim
   - H. Third World

VIII. International Company/Industry Case Studies

IX. International Business textbooks

X. Official Documents and Reports (International Business and Economic Focus)
   - A. United Nations
   - B. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
   - C. World Bank
   - D. International Monetary Fund
   - E. Inter-American Development Bank

The *Handbook* also includes curriculum development efforts currently underway at various CIBERs. Examples of these efforts include course syllabi, case studies, simulations, teaching notes, symposia, newsletters, degree programs, and a handbook for developing a curriculum in multiculturalism in management education.

The Diversity/Conformance Paradox of University Business Curricula

The purpose of this final section is to discuss and support a response to the statement that, "University business programs, while tolerating some diversity, should closely conform to business programs offered by other Universities." As previously mentioned, conformance to generally accepted curricular standards helps ensure quality in education. Since business

programs prepare students to manage organizations, these standards must reflect the concerns of business and industry. This is especially true for international business education. In 1979, the International Standards Organization began the development of a series of quality system standards to address the consistent quality needs of growing international trade. The standards, known as ISO 9000, were completed in 1987. Since that time, "the ISO 9000 series has become a universal quality system standard with broad implications to both domestic and international trade" (Riswadkar, 1995, p. 30).

University business programs should prepare students to meet the needs of industry by providing programs of consistent quality and outcomes. There is a need for university business programs to closely conform to business programs offered by other universities. This can be accomplished through adhering to generally accepted curriculum standards and outcomes expectations for graduates of such programs. One study of business trends and their impact on education states:

> Development and use of a rigorous and relevant curriculum is a principle method through which business schools provide the skills and knowledge required by their students to work effectively in culturally divers firms that are competing in the global economy. Not surprisingly, the realities of the new competitive arena should and do affect the content of business school curricula. Such a curriculum gives students opportunities to understand theory and how to apply that theory successfully in different business environments (Ireland, Ramsower, & Carini, 1993, p. 23).

The authors conclude that a key challenge for university business schools is to equip students with the skills they need ion order to be hired and valued by employing firms.

Academically based business education in the United states began in 1881 with the establishment of the Wharton School of Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania. The curriculum at that time had an applied emphasis, and as other universities followed suit, considerable variance in program quality ensued. The issue of quality standards were not substantially addressed until the publication of studies sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation in1959. As a result, many business schools refocused their business curricula from practice and application to theory and research (Porter, Muller, & Helen, 1997). The authors state that while conformance to the new standards greatly enhanced the quality of

business education, too much focus on standards has occurred. Graduates of business programs must be prepared to compete in a diverse global competitive environment.

> It is well established that teaching and learning are not one and the same. At present, higher education is premised on the simplistic belief that a student who passes a course has learned the subject matter. The bottom-line expectations of the institution, the student, and the employer have, hopefully, been satisfied. But learning is a much more complex process than this. It involves the integration of interrelated experiences and conceptualization, not to mention creative new applications.
>
> If organizations are to compete in a world of accelerated change, they must create attitudes toward learning that reflect breadth of perspective in the long term. Who will prepare leaders for the private and public sector organizations of the next millennium if our schools increasingly model themselves, their curricula, and their pedagogies after traditional business structures and values? How can students learn to be comfortable with uncertainty and diversity of viewpoint, to be undaunted by the inevitability of occasional setbacks, and to be challenged by opportunities to continue learning and collaborating?
>
> We know of no simple answers to these questions. We are, however, confident that an educational culture dominated by short-term, bottom-line values is unlikely to offer the open, nurturing environment necessary for such explorations. If management education is to continue its contributions to the development of tomorrows leaders, business schools must retain a meaningful degree of autonomy in order to provide a place where all ideas -- orthodox as well as unorthodox -- are assured free expression and discussion, and where learning is the most important business (Porter, Muller, & Helen, 1997, p. 23).

Clearly, then, a paradox exists in university business curricula. One one hand, business school curricula should closely conform to generally accepted standards. On the other hand, some curricular diversity across business schools is necessary. Standards are required to maintain constancy and consistency across the globe in the curriculum; diversity is required to allow for localized variations and adjustments needed to respond to changes in the turbulent external environment.

Finally, the specialized accrediting bodies recognize this paradox and provide suggestions as to how business schools should address the issue.

> Accreditation focuses on the quality of educational activities. Standards set demanding but realistic thresholds, challenge schools to pursue continuous improvement, and provide guidance for improvement in educational programs.

> AACSB member schools reflect a diverse range of missions. That diversity is a positive characteristic to be fostered, not a disadvantage to be reduced or minimized. Therefore, one of accrediting's guiding principles is the tolerance, and even encouragement, of diverse paths to achieving high quality in management education. Thus, the accreditation process endorses and supports diversity in management education.
>
> Acknowledging the diversity within the AACSB, all member schools share a common purpose -- the preparation of students to enter useful professional and societal lives. Accordingly, accreditation focuses on a school's clear determination of its mission...each school must achieve and demonstrate an acceptable level of performance consistent with its overall mission while satisfying AACSB standards. Substantial opportunity remains for schools to differentiate themselves through a variety of activities (AACSB, 1996, p. 1).

The AACSB accreditation standards require the requesting business school to meet the criteria set forth in its accreditation documents. However, the association clearly recognizes that some standards, or portions of those standards, depending on the mission of the school, may apply differentially. Likewise, the ACBSP (1992, p.1) promotes a similar case:

> Due to the diversity of missions of colleges and universities, these resource-based standards may not be applicable to all institutions. An ACBSP business school or program as part of an accreditation process, may decide to request a deviation from a particular standard and provide the necessary justification to support such a deviation.
>
> In general, an institution requesting a deviation from one or more of these resource-based standards will be obliged to demonstrate through outcomes assessment or other appropriate measures that the quality of the business education being offered by the institution requesting deviation is comparable, in content, to the quality of business education being offered by accredited ACBSP schools or programs that meet these resource-based standards.

The ACBSP adds the stipulation that, although curricular diversity is tolerated and welcome, the institution seeking diversity must prove outcomes comparable to those being achieved via adherence to standards.

REFERENCES

American Assembly of Colleges & Schools of Business (1996). *Achieving quality and continuous improvement through self-evaluation and peer review.* St. Louis, MO: AACSB.

American Assembly of Colleges & Schools of Business (1997). *Shared practices: a collection of some of the strategic alliances and partnerships underway in AACSB member organizations.* St. Louis, MO: AACSB.

Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs. (1992). *Accreditation Standards.*

CIBER Resource Handbook (1995). *Ciberweb*, Purdue University CIBER, http://www2.mgmt.purdue.edu/Centers/CIBER/Ciber.htm

Cowton, C., & Dunfee, T. (1995). Internationalizing the business ethics curriculum: a survey. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 14(5), 331-338.

De Meyer, A. (1996, May). The late-starter's alternative MBA. *Director*, 49(8), 85.

Desruisseaux, P. (1995, June 23). Canada, Mexico, and U.S. sponsor new academic exchange project. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, A35.

Ehrhardt, M. (1992). Managerial education: a guide to curriculum and content. *Survey of Business*, 28(1), 13-17.

Ensby, M. & Mahmoodi, F. (1997, April). Using the Baldridge Award criteria in college classrooms. *Quality Progress*, 30(4), 85-91.

Green, R. & Gerber, L. (1996). Educator insights: strategic partnerships for global education -- linkages with overseas institutions. *Journal of International Marketing*, 4(3), 89-100.

Handbook of Accreditation (1994). *North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education.* Chicago, IL.

Hasan, S. (1993). Business schools: ostrich syndrome. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 6(1), 47-53.

Hemispheric consortium to prepare business students for NAFTA. (1996, July 16). *Chronicle of Higher Education*, A39.

Kendrick, J. (1993, January). Universities, corporations report progress in integrating total quality into curriculums. *Quality*, 32(1), 13.

Kenichi, O. (1989). Managing in a borderless world. *Harvard Business Review*, 67(3), 153.

Kwok, C. & Arpan, J. (1994). A comparison of international business education at U.S. and European business schools in the 1990's. *Management Information Review*, 34(4), 357-379.

International exchanges. (1994, December 7). *Chronicle of Higher Education*, A42.

Ireland, R., Ramsower, R., & Carini, G. (1993). Business trends and their impact on education. *Baylor Business Review*, 11(1), 21-25.

Jacob, N. (1993). The internationalization of management education. *Selections*, 10(1), 18-22.

Matthews, W. (1993, January). The missing element in higher education. *Journal for Quality & Participation*, 16(1), 102-108.

McAlevey, L., Everett, A., & Sullivan, C. (1995). The changing relevance of quality in business statistics courses: an international comparison. *Asia Pacific Journal of Quality Management*, 4(3), 4-15

Moyne, S. (1995). Research note: international marketing management: a separate academic discipline? *International Marketing Review*, 12(3), 5-14.

New England Association Standards for Accreditation. (1992). *The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges.* Bedford, MA.

Northwest Association of Colleges and Schools Accreditation handbook. (1994). *Commission on Colleges, Northwest Association of Colleges and Schools.* Seattle, WA.

Odenwald, S. (1993). A guide for global training. *Training and Development*, 47(7), 22- 31.

Porter, J., Rehder, R., & Muller, H. (1997). The invasion of the mind snatchers: the business of business education. *Selections*, 13(2), 15-23.

Riswadkar, A. (1995). ISO 9000: a global standard for quality. *Professional Safety*, 40(4), 30-32.

Skousen, F. & Bertelsen, D. (1994). A look at change in management education. *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, 59(1), 13-20.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Criteria for Accreditation. (1996). *The Commission on Colleges.* Decatur, GA.

Statland de Lopez, R. (1995, August). Giving it the old college try. *Business Mexico*, 5(8), 33-35.

Tanya Bondarenko seeks American education. (1994, Spring). *Baylor Business Review*, 12(1), 12-14.

Zoffer, D. (1987). Accreditation bends before the winds of change. *Educational Record*, Winter, 43-46.